

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 530
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AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
DIA/DN2
USCINCEUR
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
USDOCOSLOTY NAPLES
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ANKARA 0908

E.O. GDS
TAGS: PINS, PORS, SHUM, TU
SUBJECT: POLITICAL TRENDS ANALYSIS: POLITICAL VIOLENCE WORSENS

REF: ANKARA 0141 (DTG 061555Z JAN 78)

1. SUMMARY: JANUARY 1978 WAS THE WORST MONTH FOR
POLITICAL VIOLENCE SINCE MARTIAL LAW WAS IMPOSED IN TURKEY
IN 1971. THE CONTINUING VIOLENCE IS STILL AN INTERNAL
POLITICAL PHENOMENON INVOLVING SEVERAL GROUPS INCLUDING
STUDENTS WHO ARE STRUGGLING FOR THE SUPERIORITY OF THEIR
IDEOLOGY ON CAMPUSES, LEFTISTS OF DIFFEREING PERSUASIONS,
AND RIGHT-WING YOUTHS WHOSE GOALS APPEAR TO INCLUDE
RETRIBUTION AND DESTABILIZING THE GOVERNMENT. VIOLENCE
HAS MULTIPLE ORIGINS AND HAS BECOME SO INGRAINED THAT IT
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WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO BRING UNDER CONTROL. THE
ECEVIT GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN INITIAL STEPS TO QUELL
VILENCE, BUT THERE IS NO PRESENT INDICATION THAT IT WILL BE
ANY MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN ITS PREDECESSOR. IF THE ECEVIT
GOVERNMENT CANNOT SUCCEED, ITS CONFIDENCE AND ITS POSITION
WILL BE SERIOUSLY WEAKENED. END SUMMARY.

2. THE LEVEL OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN TURKEY DURING JANUARY 1978, THE FIRST MONTH OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT, ROSE TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL SINCE THE EARLY 1970,S. ACCORDING TO ONE OPPOSITION PAPER (SON HAVADIS) THERE WERE 332 BOMBINGS, 480 WOUNDED AND 69 KILLED IN POLITICAL ACTS. ANOTHER OPPOSITION PAPER (TERCUMAN) WRITES THAT 51 PERSONS WERE KILLED DURING THE MONTH AND COMPARES THIS FIGURE WITH THE 18 REPORTED KILLINGS IN JANUARY 1977, WHEN A DEMIREL-LED COALITION WAS IN POWER. BON CONTRAST, IN DECEMBER 1977, 42 KILLINGS WERE REPORTED, THE HIGHEST NUMBER DURIG THE FIVE MONTH RULE OF THE SECOND DEMIREL COALITION. ALONG WITH THE INCREASING NUMBER OF POLITICAL INCIDENTS, THER HAS BEEN A DISTRUBING RISE IN THE NUMBER OF ATTACKS ON AMERICAN AND AMERICAN FACILITIES.

3. THE VIOLENCE IN TURKEY HAS A NUMBER OF SOURCES.

A. THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE ARE IDEOLOGICALLY COMMITTED STUDENTS OF THE RIGHT OR LEFT WHO ARE STRUGGLING FOR DOMINANCE BY THEIR GROUP ON CAMPUSES OR IN OFF-CAMPUS DORMITORIES.

B. A SECOND, BUT LESS IMPORTANT SOURCE OF VIOLENCE, PRIMARILY AMONG STUDENT-AGE YOUTHS, IS THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE BETWEEN FACTIONS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT. INCIDENTS OF THIS TYPE ARE SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO CONFIDENTIAL

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DISTINGUISH FROM ASSAULTS MADE BY RADICAL LEFTIST GROUPS WHOSE NIHILISTIC DOCTRINE INCLUDES OVER-THROW OF THE SOCIAL ORDER, NO MATTER WHO IS IN THE GOVERNMENT.

C. ANOTHER SOURCE IS THE EXTREME RIGHT, MUCH OF WHICH IS BELIEVED TO HAVE TIES TO THE NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP). THIS GROUP WAS RELATIVELY QUIESCENT DURING THE LAST HALF OF 1977, BUT NOW MAY BE STRIKING BACK AT THE LEFT FOR ATTACKS MADE DURING THAT PERIOD. BELIEVING COALITION, THE EXTREME RIGHT MAY ALSO BE ATTEMPTING TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH WILL BRING DOWN THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT.

D. AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT SOURCE OF VIOLENCE IS REVENGE AND RETAIATION FOR PREVIOUS VIOLENCE.

4. THE CONTINUING VIOLENCE WHICH HAS CHARACTERIZED TURKEY'S POLITICAL SCENE SINCE 1968 IS A PRODUCT OF MANY SOCIAL FACTORS, THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH SEEM TO BE: A) DISSATISFACTION WITH AN, IN MANY CASES, ANACHRONISTIC EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, B) LIMITED JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOLLOWING GRUADAUTION, AND C) DEEPENING DIVISIONS AMONG STUDENTS

WHICH ARE REFLECTED IN STRUGGLES FOR DOMINATION OF
UNIVERSITIES, DORMITORIES, AND EVEN HIGH SCHOOLS.
INCREASINGLY, POLITICAL VIOLENCE IS AGGRAVATED BY WHAT IS
PERCEIVED AS ABREAK-DOWN IN POLITICAL AUTHORITY. TURKEY
HAS HAD FOUR DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS.
BECAUSE OF THE RESULTING CHANGES IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LAW AND ORDER, THE POLICY HAVE
SUFFERED CONSTANT SHUFFLING OF LEADERSHIP WHICH HAS HAD
A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THEIR ALREADY LOW MORALE AND PERFORMANCE.

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5. THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT ENTERED OFFICE
PROMISING TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THE EFFORT TO BRING
VIOLENCE UNDER CONTROL. TO CARRY OUT THIS PROMISE ECEVIT'S
FIRST STEP WAS TO ESTABLISH AN INTER-MINISTERIAL COORDINATING
COMMITTEE. HE ALSO SELECTED AS MINISTER OF INTERIOR A
RESPECTED, RETIRED AIR FORCE GENERAL, IRFAN OZAYDINLI. AS
EXPECTED, ECEVIT HAS ALSO RESORTED FREQUENTLY TO JAWBONING,
BUT SO FAR HIS RHETORIC SEEMS TO HAVE HAD NO EFFECT.
ALTHOUGH THE OVERALL PROGRAM OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT TO
QUELL POLITICAL VIOLENCE HAS APPARENTLY NOT YET BEEN PUT
INTO EFFECT, SOME INITIAL STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN:

A. THE HEAD OF THE TURKISH NATIONAL POLICE
HAS BEEN REPLACED.

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B. MINISTER OF INTERIOR OZAYDINLI, RELYING ON
HIS MILITARY BACKGROUND TO EASE THE TRADITIONAL RESISTANCE
OF A MILITARY ORGANIZATION TO CIVILIAN DIRECTION,
HAS ESTABLISHED FIRMER CONTROL OVER THE JANDARMA THAN ANY
OF HIS PREDECESSORS. (THE JANDARMA IS A LARGE (120,000) MILITARY
SECURITY FORCE GENERALLY BASED IN RURAL AREAS.)

C. THE JANDARMA REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY
FOR SECURITY IN AREAS, SUCH AS STUDENT DORMITORIES, WHICH TRADITIO-
NALLY HAVE BEEN RESERVED FOR THE POLICE.

6. AS POINTED OUT IN REFTTEL, THE ENORMITY OF THE PROBLEM
MAKES ECEVIT'S PROSPECTS FOR EARLY SUCCESS LESS THAN
BRIGHT AND THE BLOODY EVENTS OF THE LAST MONTH UNDERLINE
THE FACT THAT ANY PROGRESS TOWARD RESTORING ORDER IS LIKELY
TO BE MADE SLOWLY, IF AT ALL. THE PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF
THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT (REFLECTING THE WIDELY HELD BELIEF
AMONG THE MODERATE LEFT THAT A PRIMARY CAUSE OF VIOLENCE
DURING THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT WAS THE PROTECTION AFFORDED
RIGHT WING MILITANTS), HAVE GIVEN RISE TO FEARS THAT THE
ESSENCE OF THE ANTI-VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN WILL BE A VENDETTA
AGAINST THE RIGHT. SHOULD THE RIGHT BECOME CONVINCED THAT
IT IS UNDER OFFICIAL ATTACK, VIOLENCE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY
INCREASE, AT LEAST INITIALLY.

7. SHOULD THE EFFORTS OF THE ECEVIT GOVERNMENT NOT YIELD
VISIBLE, POSITIVE RESULTS IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, ECEVIT
WILL BEGIN TO FACE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN MAINTAINING
THE CONFIDENCE OF THE TURKISH PUBLIC, NEARLY ALL OF
HIS SUPPORTERS AND EVEN MANY OF HIS DETRACTORS HAD BECOME
CONVINCED THAT ECEVIT, AND ONLY ECEVIT, COULD RESTORE
DOMESTIC PEACE. IF IT BEGINS TO APPEAR THAT HE CANNOT
DO SO, PRESSURES FOR SOME ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION COULD BEGIN
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